

document has not been recorded in the Office, then the written request must state that the document has been filed for recordation. The address of the assignee must be made of record in the application file.

PART 4—COMPLAINTS REGARDING INVENTION PROMOTERS

Sec.

- 4.1 Complaints regarding invention promoters.
- 4.2 Definitions.
- 4.3 Submitting complaints.
- 4.4 Invention promoter reply.
- 4.5 Notice by publication.
- 4.6 Attorneys and Agents.

AUTHORITY: 35 U.S.C. 2(b)(2) and 297.

SOURCE: 65 FR 3129, Jan. 20, 2000, unless otherwise noted.

§ 4.1 Complaints regarding invention promoters.

These regulations govern the Patent and Trademark Office's (Office) responsibilities under the Inventors' Rights Act of 1999, which can be found in the U.S. Code at 35 U.S.C. 297. The Act requires the Office to provide a forum for the publication of complaints concerning invention promoters. The Office will not conduct any independent investigation of the invention promoter. Although the Act provides additional civil remedies for persons injured by invention promoters, those remedies must be pursued by the injured party without the involvement of the Office.

§ 4.2 Definitions.

(a) *Invention Promoter* means any person, firm, partnership, corporation, or other entity who offers to perform or performs invention promotion services for, or on behalf of, a customer, and who holds itself out through advertising in any mass media as providing such services, but does not include—

(1) Any department or agency of the Federal Government or of a State or local government;

(2) Any nonprofit, charitable, scientific, or educational organization qualified under applicable State law or described under section 170(b)(1)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986;

(3) Any person or entity involved in the evaluation to determine commercial potential of, or offering to license or sell, a utility patent or a previously filed nonprovisional utility patent application;

(4) Any party participating in a transaction involving the sale of the stock or assets of a business; or

(5) Any party who directly engages in the business of retail sales of products or the distribution of products.

(b) *Customer* means any individual who enters into a contract with an invention promoter for invention promotion services.

(c) *Contract for Invention Promotion Services* means a contract by which an invention promoter undertakes invention promotion services for a customer.

(d) *Invention Promotion Services* means the procurement or attempted procurement for a customer of a firm, corporation, or other entity to develop and market products or services that include the invention of the customer.

§ 4.3 Submitting complaints.

(a) A person may submit a complaint concerning an invention promoter with the Office. A person submitting a complaint should understand that the complaint may be forwarded to the invention promoter and may become publicly available. The Office will not accept any complaint that requests that it be kept confidential.

(b) A complaint must be clearly marked, or otherwise identified, as a complaint under these rules. The complaint must include:

(1) The name and address of the complainant;

(2) The name and address of the invention promoter;

(3) The name of the customer;

(4) The invention promotion services offered or performed by the invention promoter;

(5) The name of the mass media in which the invention promoter advertised providing such services;

(6) An explanation of the relationship between the customer and the invention promoter; and

(7) A signature of the complainant.

(c) The complaint should fairly summarize the action of the invention promoter about which the person complains. Additionally, the complaint should include names and addresses of persons believed to be associated with the invention promoter. Complaints, and any replies, must be addressed to: Mail Stop 24, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450.

(d) Complaints that do not provide the information requested in paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section will be returned. If complainant's address is not provided, the complaint will be destroyed.

(e) No originals of documents should be included with the complaint.

(f) A complaint can be withdrawn by the complainant or the named customer at any time prior to its publication.

[65 FR 3129, Jan. 20, 2000, as amended at 68 FR 14338, Mar. 25, 2003]

§ 4.4 Invention promoter reply.

(a) If a submission appears to meet the requirements of a complaint, the invention promoter named in the complaint will be notified of the complaint and given 30 days to respond. The invention promoter's response will be made available to the public along with the complaint. If the invention promoter fails to reply within the 30-day time period set by the Office, the complaint will be made available to the public. Replies sent after the complaint is made available to the public will also be published.

(b) A response must be clearly marked, or otherwise identified, as a response by an invention promoter. The response must contain:

(1) The name and address of the invention promoter;

(2) A reference to a complaint forwarded to the invention promoter or a complaint previously published;

(3) The name of the individual signing the response; and

(4) The title or authority of the individual signing the response.

§ 4.5 Notice by publication.

If the copy of the complaint that is mailed to the invention promoter is returned undelivered, then the USPTO

will primarily publish a Notice of Complaint Received on the USPTO's Internet home page at <http://www.uspto.gov>. Only where the USPTO's Web site is unavailable for publication will the USPTO publish the Notice of Complaint in the *Official Gazette* and/or the *FEDERAL REGISTER*. The invention promoter will be given 30 days from such notice to submit a reply to the Notice of Complaint. If the USPTO does not receive a reply from the invention promoter within 30 days, the complaint alone will become publicly available.

[68 FR 9553, Feb. 28, 2003]

§ 4.6 Attorneys and Agents.

Complaints against registered patent attorneys and agents will not be treated under this section, unless a complaint fairly demonstrates that invention promotion services are involved. Persons having complaints about registered patent attorneys or agents should contact the Office of Enrollment and Discipline at Mail Stop OED, Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office, PO Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450, and the attorney discipline section of the attorney's state licensing bar if an attorney is involved.

[68 FR 14338, Mar. 25, 2003]

PART 5—SECURITY OF CERTAIN INVENTIONS AND LICENSES TO EXPORT AND FILE APPLICATIONS IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES

SECURITY ORDERS

Sec.

5.1 Applications and correspondence involving national security.

5.2 Secrecy order.

5.3 Prosecution of application under secrecy orders; withholding patent.

5.4 Petition for rescission of secrecy order.

5.5 Permit to disclose or modification of secrecy order.

5.6-5.8 [Reserved]

LICENSES FOR FOREIGN EXPORTING AND FILING

5.11 License for filing in a foreign country an application on an invention made in the United States or for transmitting international application.

5.12 Petition for license.

5.13 Petition for license; no corresponding application.